



An Indian Camp

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The early photograph above shows a pioneer family and their wagons as they pause for a rest on the long trek westward along the Oregon Trail. Their "prairie schooners," as the wagons were called, served both as a means of transporting all their possessions and as a home while on the trail. Opposite, New Mexico cowboys drive their herd out to pasture just as day breaks.

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During the period in which trans-Appalachian settlement reached the Missouri River, settlements were primarily agricultural, performing services for small farmsteads. The urban form showed a strong preference for the gridiron pattern and its practical application to speculative interests. Above all, significant urban clusters were based on water transportation. Rivers, lake sites, and canals were invariably associated with significant centers.

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bers. In 1850, ten thousand wagons and fifty thousand oxen passed through Fort Kearny, Nebraska, on the way west along the Oregon Trail. This flood of western migration and the hostile nature of the Indian population prompted the federal government to establish numerous military outposts for the protection of travelers. Military garrisons depended on supplies shipped from the East, and the necessity of transporting supplies resulted in the formation of freighting companies by enterprising individuals. Settlements to supply the needs of travelers and freighters began to grow at strategic stopping places, such as river crossings and water and forage locations. In time, a pattern of settlements based on migration routes across the plains came into being, to be the cities of a later date.

The oxen, mules, and cattle depended on the natural grasslands of the plains for forage. Experience demonstrated that the native